

want one America, if you want to move in the right direction, if you want to keep the prosperity going, you've got one choice. You've got to be for our crowd: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Frank O'Bannon, Julia Carson, the people that helped to bring America back. You can do it, Indiana.

Thank you, and God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:48 a.m. in Edy's Grand Hall at the Indianapolis State Fairgrounds.

In his remarks, he referred to Jeff Smulyan, chairman and chief executive officer, Emmis Communications Corp.; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Gov. Frank O'Bannon of Indiana; National Basketball Association Hall of Fame members Larry Bird and Isaiah Thomas; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. Julia Carson was a candidate for reelection in Indiana's 10th Congressional District.

Remarks at a Brunch for Hillary Clinton in Johnson City, New York

October 22, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. I'm sorry to keep you waiting, but I'm sure glad you waited. I'm delighted to see you. Thank you.

Thank you, Margaret. Thank you, Barbara. I want to thank all the people who are here. Do you want to sit down? I want to thank the people of Broome County for voting for me in 1996, the first time a Democrat has carried this county in over 30 years. Thank you very much.

I also want to tell you how very much I admire your Representative in Congress, Maurice Hinchey. What a great friend he's been to me and to you and to the people of the State of New York. He's done a wonderful job for you.

More than anything else, I want to say thank you. The people of this State have been wonderful for 8 years to me and to Al Gore. Last year—I mean, in 1996 we carried 52 of New York's 62 counties, and I was so gratified by the support that you gave us, so thank you; thank you very, very much.

I came here today in my capacity as Presidential spouse—[laughter]—to ask for your help for Hillary in this race for the United States Senate and to ask you, in the closing days of this election season, to go out across this community, out across this country, out across this State and talk to all of your friends and neighbors about the race for Senate, about the race for President, about what is at stake in this election.

I try to say this now at every event I can, but I'm so gratified to see you here. But most

of you have tons of friends and relatives and co-workers who will vote on election day but have never come to an event like this. Isn't that right?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And therefore, all they may know about the election is either what they see on television or what someone says to them or what kind of discussions they enter into. So while this is a rally and we'd all like to spend all our time just shouting, on this Sunday, I think it's fair to say that—in my tradition we often say, I realize that I am here preaching to the saved. [Laughter]

And so what I would like to ask you to do is to think about, just for a moment, the points I'd like to make, and then make a little pledge to yourself that every day between now and election you will share these thoughts with your friends, your neighbors, your family members, your co-workers who have never come to an event like this, because you can make the difference.

First of all, I want to say a few things about my wife. In the 30 years, almost, that we have known each other, I have seen her passion, her energy, and her activism devoted to the causes of children and family, health care and education, economic opportunity for people who have been left out or left behind. In the 8 years we have been in the White House, she has been a leading force for all those causes: for the family and medical leave law, the very first bill I signed—now, 22 million Americans have taken some time off without losing their

jobs when a baby is born or a family member is sick, a profoundly important thing—for expanding our support of child care for working families, so that people can succeed at home and at work; for expanding our efforts to have more preschool and after-school opportunities and mentoring programs for our children; for doing more for early childhood development.

From the time we served before I became President, Hillary has always been passionately interested in what could be done to bring job opportunities to people who want to work and don't have them, what can be done to put businesses in areas where businesses have left.

And one of the things that I'm proudest of, to celebrate the millennium, she created a project, America's Millennium Project, to "Honor the Past and Imagine the Future." It is now the largest single historic preservation effort in the history of America, and a lot of the places that were preserved are here in New York State, from George Washington's revolutionary headquarters to Harriet Tubman's home, places that will increase tourism as well as community pride.

Of all the people I've ever known in public life, I've never known anyone who had quite the combination of brains and heart and ability to get things done and consistent caring that she does. She will be a magnificent United States Senator for the people of New York.

Now, what I want to ask you—it's also important to recognize, however, that this Senate race inevitably is playing out against the background of the national election and the great questions all Americans must decide, for they, too, will affect the people of New York. And I believe there are three great questions in this election, and I just want to tell you what they are. They affect the Senate race, but they also clearly affect the race for President and Vice President and for all the races for Congress and all the races for Senate throughout the United States.

First of all, let me say just looking at the debates, let me tell you a couple of the things that aren't at issue, that aren't questions in this election. Number one, this election is not about change versus the status quo. If someone said, "Vote for me. I'll do everything President Clinton did," I would not vote for that person. Why? Because America is changing. The world is changing. You will live in a time of very rapid change for at least another 10, maybe 20 years.

The issue is not whether we're going to change. It is how we're going to change.

Are we going to build on the progress of the last 8 years or go back to a failed policy we already tried in the past? That is the issue in this election. The issue is not whether the Democrats should be rejected because of the partisanship in Washington. Let me just say this—I've heard a lot of that talk. It wasn't we who decided that no Republicans would vote to bring down the deficit they created. *[Laughter]*

And when we could work with them, we did. We had a bipartisan welfare reform bill. We had a bipartisan Balanced Budget Act of '97. We had a bipartisan telecommunications law that has created hundreds of thousands of good jobs and thousands and thousands of businesses. We got bipartisan agreement on 100,000 police, 100,000 teachers, and many other things. When we could make a bipartisan agreement, we did.

Last week we were trying to get a bipartisan agreement to put more money into Medicare, to help the hospitals in rural areas, to help the teaching hospitals, to help the in-home providers, to help the nursing homes to deal with some of their problems. They walked away from the bipartisan agreement and have come up with the Republicans' only solution that gives a disproportionate amount of money to the HMO's. That's not our decision. Now, I'll hang tough and eventually we'll come back, and we'll get a bipartisan agreement again. This is not about bipartisanship. The Democrats favor bipartisanship, and our record is that.

The one last thing they say this election is about that it most assuredly isn't, is whether you should be for their side because they trust the people, and we're for big Government. You might hear some of that up here. *[Laughter]* So let me just give you a little evidence.

It was this Democratic administration that has reduced the size of the Federal Government to its smallest point since 1960, when Dwight Eisenhower was President and John Kennedy came here looking for your vote. It was this administration that eliminated 16,000 pages of Federal regulations, that enabled the Small Business Administration to cut its applications for small-business people from an inch thick to one page and give people an answer in 72 hours. It was this administration that got rid of two-thirds of the regulations that the Federal

Government, under the previous Republican administration, was imposing on States and local school districts. If you're for smaller Government, our candidates are your candidates. We're for better Government and smaller Government. That's not the issue.

Here are the three great questions the American people will decide in this election. Number one: Do you want to keep this prosperity going and extend it to people and places who aren't yet fully a part of it? That's the first question. Our candidates favor a tax cut we can afford, that helps more middle class families than theirs does, with deductibility for college tuition, for long-term care costs for the elderly and disabled family members, for retirement savings, for child care, things that will help—and for extra incentives for people to invest in areas that aren't yet growing in the economy.

It is admittedly only one-third the size of their tax cut. Why is that? Because we know, number one, we've got to have some money to invest in education, in health care, in the future of the country. And number two, we've got to keep paying this debt down until we make America debt-free for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President.

Now, why is that? Because their tax cut is 3 times bigger, and they want to partially privatize Social Security. That costs another trillion dollars. And then they've got several hundred billion dollars they want to spend. When you add it all up, we're back in deficits, and we can't pay the debt off. And what does that mean? Higher interest rates, about a percent a year over a decade. Do you know what that's worth to you? If you take the Al Gore/Joe Lieberman/Hillary plan, you get a percent lower interest rate.

Do you know what that's worth to the American people? Three hundred and ninety billion dollars in lower home mortgages; \$30 billion in lower car payments; \$15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; lower business loan interest rates; more businesses; more jobs; higher raises; a stronger stock market—that's a tax cut for all Americans. Get this country out of debt, and keep those interest rates down.

Now, that's a real question. Do you want to keep the prosperity going and extend it to people and places left behind? We tried it our way for 8 years. We tried it their way for 12 years before. Our way works better than their

way. We need to keep changing in the right direction to keep the prosperity going in America.

Here is the second question: Do you want to build on the progress in our society of the last 8 years, or do you want to return to policies that we know don't work? And let me just give you a couple of examples. The welfare rolls have been cut in half. They're the lowest in 30 years. The crime rate has gone down every year. It's the lowest in 26 years. We have the lowest poverty rate in 20 years. We have—as I said earlier, Government spending as a percent of our economy is the lowest it has been in 34 years. We have cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, 90 percent of our children immunized. We have more land set aside in public trust for all time than under any administration except that of Theodore Roosevelt, almost 100 years ago.

What is the point of this? The point of this is, we have proved you can grow the economy and improve the environment. We have the number of people without health insurance going down for the first time in 12 years, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program. We have supported local school districts with our strategy of higher standards, accountability, and more investment. Test scores are up. The drop-out rate is down. The college-going rate is at an all-time high. There has been a huge increase in the number of our children taking advanced placement tests, and more and more failing schools are turning around.

Now, the question you have to ask yourself is, are we going to build on this progress or go back and adopt policies that have been proven not to work? In every single one of these areas there is a disagreement.

They have committed to relax our environmental commitment. They have committed to end our commitment to 100,000 teachers. They are not for our school construction program to help the schools build or repair facilities that are either outdated or grievously overcrowded. They do not approve of our crime policy, and they have committed to abolish our commitment to 100,000 police and not to go for mandatory child trigger locks and real background checks and other things that are profoundly important.

Now, it's not like we had a test here. We've tried it our way, and we tried it their way. Our way works better. You have to decide if you're going to build on the progress of the last 8 years.

So, question one, are we going to keep the prosperity going and extend it to people and places left behind? Question two, are we going to build on the progress of the last 8 years? Question three, are we going to keep trying to bring this country together, across all the lines that divide us to build one America, fair for every responsible citizen with opportunity for every responsible citizen?

Now, what are those questions? We're for hate crimes legislation. I mean real hate crimes legislation that protects all people who are singled out because of who they are, for abuse and criminal conduct. We are for legislation to strengthen the equal pay law, so that women who are doing the same kind of work get equal pay for it. We believe the immigrants that are in this country legally ought to be treated fairly and not discriminated against. If they're working, if they're paying taxes, they ought to be eligible to be treated in a fair way.

We're for an increase in the minimum wage. And we don't believe—we do not demonize any interest groups, but we think no interest group should keep us from pursuing the public interest. They say they're for a Patients' Bill of Rights, but theirs is weaker than ours because the HMO's don't want it to be stronger. They say they want to help older people get drugs, but they're not for a Medicare drug program that gives all seniors who need it access to affordable medicine, because the drug companies aren't for it.

They say they're against hate crimes, but they won't support hate crimes legislation that covers everybody, because their extreme right doesn't believe gays should get protection in hate crimes legislation, but we believe all people should be protected.

Now, you have to decide. You have to decide what you believe. But make no mistake about it, there are big differences here: in our economic approach to keep the prosperity going; in our social approaches, whether it's on education or health care or the environment or crime; and on what we think it takes to build one America. And there are so many more issues I could mention. Campaign finance reform: They say they're for it, but they're not really for it because they don't want to be for it because they raise more money than we do. [Laughter] You've got to decide whether you care about that.

But we've got 100 percent of the Democratic caucus and enough Republicans to pass it, for the Shays-Meehan bill in the House or the McCain-Feingold, that's called after Senator McCain and Senator Feingold in the Senate, and it hasn't passed because their leadership is not for it. I think that's a part of one America. Why? Because the more we can balance out the financing in the country, the more everybody's vote counts the same.

So this is a big deal here. You have to decide. And your friends and neighbors, with their votes, will decide—the people who will never come to a meeting like this but will vote because it is the patriotic, good thing to do, or people who may not vote because they think, well, there is no real difference here. There are differences.

Now, one of the reasons the people have had a hard time finding out differences is, the other side has been quite adroit at trying to blur them, and you can't blame them, because if people figure out the differences, our crowd will win. [Laughter] I told Maurice and his colleagues a couple of days ago that we Democrats should see ourselves as America's weather corps for 2 weeks, and if we can make it clear, we'll win. [Laughter] They want cloudy. We want clear.

So I'll say it one more time: I'm grateful for your support for Hillary. And I want you to go out and tell people that she has given a lifetime to this. One of the things that has kind of hurt my feelings is, sometimes the people that aren't for us say, "Well, she wouldn't even be doing this if she weren't the First Lady." Let me tell you something, for 30 years all she has done is help other people. She never asked anybody ever—ever—to do anything for her until she started running for the United States Senate, when Members of the New York House delegation—as Maurice will tell you—came to her and asked her to consider this race.

If she hadn't been married to me, if she hadn't spent all of her years joining honest, honorable causes all over this country and all over the world, she could have been running for office years ago on her own. Now she is, and I want you to help her.

But the main thing you need to tell—you've got to go out there and ask the people of New York to think about this. You have a candidate for the Senate who cares about and knows about

and has a proven record of achievement in the things you care most about. But secondly, these three big questions should inform the peoples' votes on every one of these races. If you want to keep the prosperity going and extend it to people left behind, you've got to have a budget that keeps paying this debt down and that invests in the things that we know work. Their numbers don't add up. You simply cannot have a tax cut that big and partially privatize Social Security and spend the money you promise to spend and put us back into deficits and expect anything other than what will happen, higher interest rates and an economic slow-down. We brought arithmetic back to Washington, and we ought to keep arithmetic in the classroom of Congress and the White House.

When it comes to health care, education, the environment, and crime, we've got to keep

building on the progress of the last 8 years, not walk away from it. And maybe most important of all, we've got to keep doing those things that bring us together across the lines that divide us. If we are one America, if we are working together, if there is opportunity for every responsible citizen, if no one is singled out for discrimination, if we act like we're one community, there is nothing America can't do. The best is still out there. It's up to you to convince your fellow citizens of that.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:25 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Fountains Pavilion. In his remarks, he referred to Margaret Coffey, chair, Broome County Democratic Committee, and Barbara J. Fiala, Broome County clerk.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Alexandria Bay, New York October 22, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Wow! First of all, I want to thank Mike Schell and all the Democratic chairs and the candidates who are here. I want to thank the people of northern New York for voting for me and Al Gore in 1996. I must say, I was in the Lake Placid area a few weeks ago—Stuart and I played golf—and I was looking at the voting records of the counties in northern New York in the '96 election, and it just took my breath away.

But I'll tell you this—and you ought to think about this 2 weeks from now and talk to your friends about it—people say, “Well, is Hillary really interested in rural New York? Does she really know anything about it?” Let me tell you, I was Governor of a State for 12 years where half the people lived in communities of less than 5,000. And Al Gore grew up in Carthage, Tennessee, as well as Washington, DC, and Carthage, Tennessee, is about the same size as the community where we're having this meeting in Alexandria Bay today. Don't forget who cares about the people of upstate New York.

Now, someone told me when I pulled up today that the last President to visit here was Franklin Roosevelt in 1938. And all I can say

is, just from looking around, the others didn't know what they were missing. I'm glad to be here.

Audience member. The fishing is good, too. [Laughter]

The President. Well, the fishing may be good, but we've got to reel in some votes, first, then I'll come back and fish. [Laughter]

You know, this is an interesting time for me. It's the first time since 1974 they've had an election when I haven't been on the ballot somewhere. My party has a new leader. My family has a new candidate, and I'm sort of the Surrogate in Chief. [Laughter] And I'm glad to be here.

I want to talk to you for a moment. You know, we're all cheering, and we're happy. But I want to say something serious today, just for a moment, because in just a little more than 2 weeks we're going to have the first national election of the 21st century. And New York will pick a Senator to hold the seat held by Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Robert Kennedy. And it will have, this election, a profound impact on how the people of northern New York, this entire State, and our whole country live for quite a long while.